

## **WEEK OF June 17, 2002: MDOT Flash Facts**

### **Topic: Vehicle-Moose Collisions**

#### **Monday:**

##### **Opener/Fact:**

- Maine is a great place to see wildlife. But hitting a large animal with your vehicle can be deadly.
- About 750 moose-vehicle crashes were reported in Maine last year and 4 people died as a result.

Why are vehicle-moose crashes such a concern?

- A moose's body stands higher than most car hoods. (An adult moose be more than 9 feet tall)
- Hitting a moose is very dangerous. The tall, heavy body tends to fall into the passenger area. (A large adult moose may weigh up to 1,500 pounds.)
- They are difficult to see at night.

#### **Wednesday:**

##### **Opener/Fact:**

- Eight people were killed in moose-vehicle crashes in Maine in the past three years. Another 600 people were injured.

##### **Safety Tips:**

Reduce your chances of hitting a moose:

- Collisions with moose can happen anytime. But, most moose-vehicle crashes happen during the evening and nighttime.
- May through October are the most frequent moose-vehicle crash months. (but crashes can happen any time of the year)

Driver inattention and speed are common factors in moose-vehicle crashes.

- Reduce speed in darkness, rain and fog. These conditions can reduce your ability to see a moose on or near the road, but none of them deter moose from moving on or near the road.
- Moose are extremely difficult to see at night. Their dark-colored coats blend into the background and their eyes don't reflect light well. Use your high beams when possible.
- Although moose warning signs may be posted in areas of higher moose activity, moose collisions can occur anywhere, anytime in Maine.
- Travel at a safe speed and stay alert for moose.

#### **Friday:**

##### **Opener/Fact:**

- Moose-vehicle collisions can happen anywhere in Maine. Crashes are reported in all 16 Maine counties each year.

What to do if you see a moose:

- Don't try to drive around it. Animal movements are unpredictable.
- Stay in your vehicle. Getting out to look at, photograph or chase the moose increases your chances of being hit by another vehicle. Furthermore, moose may charge you or your vehicle.
- Give the moose plenty of room and wait for it to wander back into the woods.

Other tips:

- A roadside shoulder is not a safe place for viewing moose.
  - Other drivers may be distracted by the moose and hit your vehicle.
  - Find a place to get completely off the road and shoulder.
  - Stay in your vehicle because moose are wild, unpredictable animals.